

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strike through~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A voice region detection apparatus, comprising:
 - a preprocessing unit for dividing an input voice signal into input frames comprised of a sequence of elements having a number of runs;
 - a whitening unit for combining white noise with the frames input from the preprocessing unit;
 - a random parameter extraction unit for extracting random parameters indicating the randomness of frames from the frames input from the whitening unit;
 - a frame state determination unit for classifying the frames into voice frames and noise frames based on the random parameters extracted by the random parameter extraction unit;
 - and
 - a voice region detection unit for detecting a voice region by calculating start and end positions of a voice based on the voice and noise frames input from the frame state determination unit

wherein the random parameter extraction unit extracts a random parameter for a frame input from the whitening unit based on a determination of the number of runs in said frame,

wherein the input frames include vocal frames and fricative frames,

wherein the frame state determination unit determines that if the random parameter of a frame extracted by the random parameter extraction unit is below a first threshold, the relevant frame is one of the vocal frames,

wherein the frame state determination unit determines that, if the random parameter of a frame extracted by the random parameter extraction unit is above a second threshold, the relevant frame is one of the fricative frames; and

a color noise elimination unit for eliminating color noise from the voice region detected by the voice region detection unit, wherein the color noise elimination unit eliminates the color noise from the detected voice region if the random parameter of the voice region detected by

the voice region detection unit is below a predetermined threshold,

wherein the predetermined threshold is a value obtained by subtracting the amount of reduction in the random parameter due to the color noise from the first threshold,

wherein the predetermined threshold is a value obtained by subtracting the amount of reduction in the random parameter due to the color noise from the second threshold.

2. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the preprocessing unit samples the input voice signal according to a predetermined frequency and divides the sampled voice signal into a plurality of frames.

3. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the plurality of frames overlap with one another.

4. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the whitening unit comprise a white noise generation unit for generating the white noise, and a signal synthesizing unit for combining the frames input from the preprocessing unit with the white noise generated by the white noise generation unit.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein each of said runs consists of consecutive identical elements in the sequence of elements that comprise the frame subjected to the whitening by the whitening unit.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the random parameter is:

$$NR = \frac{R}{n}$$

Wherein NR is a random parameter of a frame, n is a half of the length of the frame, and R is the number of runs in the frame.

7. (CANCELED)

8. (CANCELLED)

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The apparatus as claimed in claim 8₁, wherein the first threshold is 0.8.

10. (CANCELLED)

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The apparatus as claimed in claim 40₁, wherein the second threshold is 1.2.

12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The apparatus as claimed in claim 40₁, wherein the frame state determination unit determines that, if the random parameter of the frame extracted by the random parameter extraction unit is above the first threshold and below the second threshold, the relevant frame is a noise frame.

13. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein the first threshold is 0.8, and the second threshold is 1.2.

14. (ORIGINAL) The apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a color noise elimination unit for eliminating color noise from the voice region detected by the voice region detection unit.

15-17. (CANCELLED)

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A voice region detection method, comprising ~~the steps of:~~

(a) if a voice signal is input, dividing the input voice signal into input frames comprised of a sequence of elements having a number of runs;

(b) performing whitening of surrounding noise by combining white noise with the frames;

(c) extracting random parameters indicating randomness of frames from the frames subjected to the whitening;

(d) classifying the frames into voice frames and noise frames based on the extracted random parameters; and

(e) detecting a voice region by calculating start and end positions of a voice based on the voice and noise frames,

wherein extracting a random parameter from a frame subjected to the whitening includes

determining the number of runs in said frame;

wherein the input frames include vocal frames and fricative frames;

determining that, if the extracted random parameter of the frame is below a first threshold, the relevant frame is one of the vocal frames;

determining that if the extracted random parameter of the frame is above a second threshold, the relevant frame is one of the fricative frames; and

eliminating the color noise from the detected voice region if the random parameter of the voice region detected by the voice region detection unit is below a predetermined threshold,

wherein the predetermined threshold is a value obtained by subtracting the amount of reduction in the random parameter due to the color noise from the first threshold,

wherein the predetermined threshold is a value obtained by subtracting the amount of reduction in the random parameter due to the color noise from the second threshold.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein step ~~(a) the dividing~~ comprises ~~the step of~~ sampling the input voice signal according to a predetermined frequency and dividing the sampled voice signal into a plurality of frames.

20. (ORIGINAL) The method as claimed in claim 19, wherein the plurality of frames overlap with one another.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein step ~~(b) the performing whitening~~ comprises ~~the steps of~~:
generating the white noise, and
combining the frames with the generated white noise.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein each of said runs consist of consecutive identical elements in the sequence of elements that comprise the frame subjected to the whitening.

23. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the random parameter is:

$$NR = \frac{R}{n}$$

wherein NR is a random parameter of a frame, n is a half of the length of the frame, and R is the number of runs in the frame.

24-25. (CANCELLED)

26. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method as claimed in claim ~~25~~18, wherein the first threshold is 0.8.

27. (CANCELLED)

28. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method as claimed in claim ~~27~~18, wherein the second threshold is 1.2.

29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method as claimed in claim ~~18~~27, further comprising ~~the step of~~ determining that, if the extracted random parameter of the frame is above the first threshold and below the second threshold, the relevant frame is a noise frame.

30. (ORIGINAL) The method as claimed in claim 29, wherein the first threshold is 0.8, and the second threshold is 1.2.

31-33. (CANCELLED)